

getting  
it right  
*for every child*

# Understanding wellbeing

Considering the quality of children and young people's lives

**The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 is about improving the wellbeing of children and young people in Scotland. The Act is wide ranging and includes key parts of the *Getting it right for every child* approach, commonly known as GIRFEC.**

Wellbeing sits at the heart of the GIRFEC approach and reflects the need to tailor the support and help that children, young people and their parents are offered to support their wellbeing.

A child or young person's wellbeing is influenced by everything around them and the different experiences and needs they have at different times in their lives.



# What is wellbeing?

To help make sure everyone – children, young people, parents, and the services that support them – has a common understanding of what wellbeing means, we describe it in terms of eight indicators.



<b>Safe</b>	Protected from abuse, neglect or harm at home, at school and in the community.
<b>Healthy</b>	Having the highest attainable standards of physical and mental health, access to suitable healthcare, and support in learning to make healthy, safe choices.
<b>Achieving</b>	Being supported and guided in learning and in the development of skills, confidence and self-esteem, at home, in school and in the community.
<b>Nurtured</b>	Having a nurturing place to live in a family setting, with additional help if needed, or where possible, in a suitable care setting.
<b>Active</b>	Having opportunities to take part in activities such as play, recreation and sport, which contribute to healthy growth and development, at home, in school and in the community.
<b>Respected</b>	Having the opportunity, along with parents and carers, to be heard and involved in decisions that affect them.
<b>Responsible</b>	Having opportunities and encouragement to play active and responsible roles at home, in school and in the community, and where necessary, having appropriate guidance and supervision, and being involved in decisions that affect them.
<b>Included</b>	Having help to overcome social, educational, physical and economic inequalities, and being accepted as part of the community in which they live and learn.

The eight wellbeing indicators are commonly referred to by their initial letters - SHANARRI.

Child protection services will continue to protect children and young people at risk of significant harm.

## How are the wellbeing indicators used?

Each child is unique and there is no set level of wellbeing that children should achieve. Each child should be helped to reach their full potential as an individual.

The wellbeing indicators help make it easier for everyone to be consistent in how they consider the quality of a child or young person's life at a particular point in time.

Families and people working with children and young people can use the wellbeing indicators to identify what help a child or young person needs in order to help them access the right support or advice.

All services working with children and young people, and those who care for them, must play their part to promote, support and safeguard children and young people's wellbeing.



## Key facts about wellbeing

**1. Every child or young person should be safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included.**

These eight indicators help make sure everyone – children, parents, and the people who work with them, such as teachers and health visitors – has a common understanding of wellbeing.

**2. The eight wellbeing indicators connect and overlap.**

For example, a health difficulty may have an effect on a child or young person achieving their goals or being active. When considered together the different elements of wellbeing give the whole picture of a child's or young person's life at a particular point in time.

**3. A child's or young person's wellbeing is influenced by everything around them.**

This includes their individual circumstances, the support they get from their family and community, and the services that support them. Factors such as adequate sleep, play and a healthy, balanced diet have a positive impact on all aspects of a child's or young person's wellbeing. While the effects of poverty and isolation can have a negative effect on their wellbeing.

**4. It is up to all of us – parents, early learning providers, health visitors, teachers, GPs, police – to work together to promote, support and safeguard the wellbeing of all of our children and young people.**

Children and young people have different experiences and needs at different times in their lives. Understanding how this affects their wellbeing, and providing the right support when they need it, helps them grow and develop and reach their full potential.



# Further information

Other information leaflets in this series include  
**Getting it right for every child, Named Person**  
and **Child's Plan**.

For more information on Getting it right for every child  
(GIRFEC) visit: [www.gov.scot/girfec](http://www.gov.scot/girfec)

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